

BP KWINANA REFINERY, DIESEL FUEL LEAK

1224. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development representing the Minister for the Environment

- (1) What action has the Government taken against BP over the diesel fuel leak at its Kwinana Refinery in May 2003?
- (2) Was this incident investigated by the Environmental Enforcement Unit?
- (3) Is a copy of their report available and if so, where is it available?
- (4) How much fuel leaked into the groundwater?
- (5) Has this fuel been recovered and if not, why not?
- (6) Why did the Department of the Environment take so long to respond to this emergency?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

The Minister for the Environment has provided the following response:

- (1) The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) investigated the matter and established that BP reported the leak within the time frame stipulated by the Act, and the company had taken all reasonable and practical precautions to prevent the incident occurring.  
  
The DEP will be conducting a mid-term licence review of BP operations to further strengthen measures to minimise leaks from storage tanks.
- (2) No, the Department's Kwinana-Peel Local Environmental Enforcement Group investigated the incident within the Department's agreed enforcement model and in accordance with the prosecution and enforcement guidelines.
- (3) The investigation was conducted over a number of months and the written material consists of numerous pieces of correspondence, file notes from meetings and site visits, briefing sheets and legal advice. This information can be accessed from the Department's Kwinana Office, upon request.
- (4) The volume of oil that escaped T114 into the subsurface was 268kL. A large amount of the oil was absorbed onto the soil grains or was trapped in the pore spaces as non-mobile residual phase. Since May 51.1 kL of oil has been recovered with the weekly average recovery rate standing at 3.3 kL/week. It is estimated that 0.005kL of hydrocarbon has entered the groundwater as a dissolved phase plume since the leak in May.  
  
Several site visits were made during the weeks following the leak.
- (5) BP is currently in the process of recovering the fuel through the use of bores and excavations around the faulty tank. Any diesel remaining will be subject to the ongoing recovery and remediation program that is already in place.
- (6) The incident was reported to the DEP on 3 May 2003 and the initial response to the situation determined. The Regional Manager personally conducted an on-site inspection the same day.